

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 CHENNAI 001395

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PTER](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: NAXALITE CONSOLIDATION A CAUSE FOR WORRY

REF: A) 03 Calcutta 516, B) Chennai 1244

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The merger of India's two largest and best organized Maoist groups, the Peoples' War (PW) and Maoist Communist Center (MCC), into the Communist Party of India (Maoist) is likely to expand the horizon of their ambitions. It will help these "Naxalites" knit together their areas of entrenchment in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand, and Bihar right up to Nepal and work toward their goal of a "Compact Revolutionary Zone." The PW and MCC are believed to have at least 4,000 armed guerillas, and may have considerably more than that with some Indian think tanks putting the number of armed PW-MCC militants at 6,500 to 7,000. They could become a serious threat to stability and prosperity at the sub-regional level. END SUMMARY.

We Have Already Merged, Say Indian Ultra Leftists

2. (SBU) On October 14, Ramakrishna, State General Secretary of Andhra Pradesh's most successful Maoist

SIPDIS
group, Peoples War (PW), announced in Hyderabad that his organization had merged with the Maoist Communist Center (MCC), to create the Communist Party of India (Maoist), aka CPI (Maoist), and not to be confused with the CPI (Marxist) that currently governs in West Bengal and Tripura. In 2003, the PW and MCCI had been added to the list of "Other Terrorist Groups" in the State Department's "Patterns of Global Terrorism" report. According to Ramakrishna, the merger took place on September 21. The Maoists thus appear to have thumbed their noses at the Indian intelligence officials who reportedly urged a meeting of Chief Ministers and officials of several Indian states on September 21, to prevent the long expected merger (Ref A). Ramakrishna also announced that the military wings of these organizations - Peoples' Guerrilla Army of PW and the Peoples' Liberation Guerrilla Army of MCC - would merge in December and retain the latter name, PLGA.

PW: The Deadliest Maoist Group In India

3. (SBU) The PW has about 2,000 armed guerillas in different states of India, according to a senior intelligence officer of Andhra Pradesh (AP). They have a formidable presence in 12 of AP's 23 districts, particularly in the "Telengana" areas and northern coastal districts, running parallel administrations in over a hundred villages. In recent years, PW presence has spread to most other districts of AP. According to AP sources, PW is also strong in several districts of Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, and Madhya Pradesh. A GOI presentation made during a conference of Chief Ministers in Hyderabad suggested that as many as 125 of India's 602 districts may now be affected. Security think tanks report that PW possesses AK series rifles, LMGs, SLRs, carbines, .303s, grenades, revolvers, pistols and landmines. Additionally, in 2004 they used crude, inaccurate, three-stage rockets to attack police stations in the Guntur and Prakasam districts. A technical squad manufactures 12-bore guns and ammunition, repairs all kinds of weapons and assembles grenades. The newspaper The Hindu and two think tank organizations have reported that former LTTE militants have provided arms training to PW guerrillas, including training in claymore mine technology. In October 2003, PW triggered nine claymore mines that nearly killed former AP Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, providing clear evidence of its lethal powers.

MCC: Less Cohesive But With More External Links

4. (SBU) AP Intelligence sources believe that MCC has

cadre and weapon strength almost equal to the PW, but that the ranks are less cohesive and disciplined. The MCC is strongest in Bihar and Jharkhand with some presence in Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, West Bengal and a few districts of Maharashtra. The MCC is believed to have played a major role in uniting the major Maoist groups in India and Nepal. Indian think tanks have reported increased cooperation between MCC and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) since 1996, including joint training camps in India. AP intelligence sources said that MCC's better connection with transnational channels is worrisome to Indian law enforcement agencies as it will now be available to the more effective PW as well.

Good-bye to Turf Wars: Consolidation Is In

15. (SBU) The notoriously splintered Naxalites of India have been on a consolidation path since the late Nineties. In 1998, the CPI (ML) Party Unity of Bihar, a major opponent of the MCC, merged with the PW, eventually reducing the infighting between various Naxalite groups in the region. PW and MCC had been talking merger for a long time but discussions broke down in 1995 following internecine turf wars. About 2001, both sides announced a truce and started operational coordination leading to the recent merger. In the recently launched talks between the AP Government and the state's Maoists, another Naxalite organization, CPI (ML) Janashakthi, participated in coordination with PW leaders. Thus, the recent mergers and coordination efforts have brought together four of India's largest and most well organized Maoist groups.

16. (SBU) In 2001, the MCC, Nepalese Maoists and PW formed a South Asia umbrella organization of ultra left groups, The Coordination Committee of Maoist Parties and Organizations of South Asia (CCOMPOSA). According to a CCOMPOSA press statement issued on July 1, 2001, the nine founding members of the CCOMPOSA include the following three parties from Bangladesh: Vanga Purba Bangala Sarbahara Party (CC), Purba Bangala Sarbahara Party (Maoist Punargathan Kendra), Bangladesh Samyabadi Party (ML); the following four parties from India: MCC, Peoples War, Revolutionary Communist Center of India (MLM), Revolutionary Communist Center of India (Maoist); one party from Nepal: Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist); and one party from Sri Lanka: Communist Party of Ceylon (Maoist). The CCOMPOSA has had three international conferences so far, the latest of which was held March 16-18, 2004, according to a press release published on the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) website on April 10, 2004. The release said that Kishore, a Maoist leader from Nepal, works as Convener of the CCOMPOSA. The political resolution of the third conference vowed to "unite all the Maoist forces in the region ever more closely, build greater bonds of unity with the struggling forces of the region and turn the respective countries of South Asia into a strong bastion of world revolution," according to the press release.

"They Will Begin To Think Big"

17. (SBU) AP Intelligence Deputy Inspector General Poornachandra Rao told Post that he worries that, after the merger, "the Naxalites will now begin to think big, and thinking big is important." According to Rao, a PW Naxalite hitherto holed up in a jungle in central Andhra Pradesh will now dream of a larger area under the militants that extends beyond the state or the country's boundaries. For years, Indian security experts have been giving warnings of a larger leftist agenda to create a "Compact Revolutionary Zone" stretching across Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Bihar to Nepal. Rao does not regard the present strength of the "armies" of PW and MCC as a daunting force, but believes that it could grow.

Conflict On Caste Lines

18. (SBU) Rao told Post that despite the merger conflicts between MCC and PW continue at the ground level. He believes that one of the areas of conflict is the fact that the PW leadership, largely of upper caste Hindu background, rules over the lower caste/Dalit rank and file while in MCC, the leadership

and rank and file are alike of lower caste background. Such tensions will probably to make coordinated activity more difficult, according to Rao. In addition, some of the groups that are nominally part of the CPI (Maoist) may be reluctant to relinquish power at the local level and may continue acts of extortion outside of the organization's umbrella.

PW Is the Clear Winner

19. (SBU) Rao also told post that in the new entity, CPI (Maoist), the PW leadership clearly retains the upper hand. General Secretary of the PW, Ganapathy, remains General Secretary of CPI (Maoist). Ganpathy (real name Muppala Lakshmana Rao) was born around 1950 in the Karimnagar District of Andhra Pradesh. He has been a hardcore leftist for over 35 years and has operated underground for 25 years, waging war on police, police-informants, political leaders and "feudalists". In 1992, he took over the PW leadership ousting its founder Kondappalli Seetharamaiah.

The Naxalite Agenda

10. (SBU) The Naxalites reject parliamentary democracy and wage a protracted "people's war" to usher in a "New Democratic Revolution" that would establish "People's Government." To that end, they engage in guerrilla warfare, inspired by Maoist thought. The successive stages of their declared program are to build "bases" in villages, form "guerrilla zones" on the way to declaring them as "liberated zones," encircle towns and cities and seize political power. Ramakrishna, the AP State Secretary of the former PW, told the press on October 12 that "Using the Dandakaranya region (which covers continuous forest tracts in Maharashtra, AP, MP, Chattisgarh, and Orissa) as a lever, we will liberate the people of this country to establish people's rule."

COMMENT

11. (SBU) Although the Naxalites are numerically not strong enough to operate the prospective "Compact Revolutionary Zone" running across the contiguous jungles in several states, India's socially and economically disadvantaged millions could feed these insurrectionist forces. Certainly the success of Nepal's Maoists in undermining the governance of that nation serves as an inspiration and a goal for India's CPI (Maoist). Post notes that PMO internal security advisor MK Naryanan has described Naxalism as the single largest internal security threat to India. The PW-MCC consolidation can only add to the threat.

12. (SBU) The Maoists have relentlessly attacked India's "mainstream communist" parties, CPI(M) and the CPI, for their "capitulation to imperialism" - meaning their market-friendly policies. Already pressed by their own cadre and ideologues who do not have to cope with issues of governance in the real world, the CPI(M) and CPI will now have now to defend themselves from the increasingly articulate Maoists, too. The mainstream leftist parties are likely to be now increasingly wary of market liberalization for fear of concerted attacks from the consolidating Naxalites. With 62 MPs in the national parliament, the CPI(M) and CPI have a major influence on GOI policies.

13. (SBU) The Naxalites are flourishing where there is a vacuum in state governance - primarily in remote tribal areas. Given the intra-state reach of the CPI (Maoist) it appears that the GOI operates at a disadvantage in leaving it to the states to address them. A successful strategy to combat the Naxalites must have two prongs: one, the security aspect whereby police and paramilitary forces confront them directly; and two, the development aspect, whereby the state dries up their support and reasserts control through the provision of services to the people. We do not believe that the CPI (Maoist) is likely to become an existential threat to the GOI at any time in the foreseeable future. However, if governance issues are not addressed, there is a substantial possibility of the CPI (Maoist) becoming a more serious threat to stability and prosperity at the sub-regional level.

END COMMENT.

14. (U) This message was coordinated with Embassy New Delhi and ConGen Calcutta.

